11/18/75

Mr. John Lindsay
Newsweek
1750 Penna. Ave., NW
Wash., D.C. 20006

Dear John,

I appreciate your coming up to me before last Friday's press conference, what you said at the end and the nature of the problem and perplexity represented by your question in the form of a statement.

I began with that same problem, question and perplexity.

This is why I undertook a long answer. In the last analysis and the one I have given others for whose professionalism I have less regard is the point Lesar made: confront the fact.

What decided me to go ahead and print Whitewash myself was the demand of a major publisher that I convert it into a charge of conspiracy against the government. As a result I've been in debt ever since and gave up what could have been profitable writing. I'll never forget the shock. I can recall and quote you the exact words of his letter.

(Books still do this without basis and they are profitable and they get reviewed in respectable publications and my refusal to do this kind of thing and sticking to fact makes me the outcast.)

You, not I, used the description conspiracy. I said and to this day I stick with whitewash and coverup. Not that I can't make out a case of conspiracy and not that I can on some levels prove it. But in the overall, the sense of your statement, I do not believe it and, in fact, in a book I wrote in 1968 and could not print or get printed went to some length to represent that conspiring isn't necessary.

I take this time because I understand your problem. I should be reading and perhaps cutting a speech I'm to make tomorrow night and now won't be able to look at until I'm on the plane.

Forgive me if I appear to be practising shrinkery. I intend it as friendship and helpfulness only and I know damned well you didn't write a story and won't.

The actuality is more mind-boggling than Watergate. It is impossible to cope with. It is also as close to completely irrefutable as anything can be. And if for one minute you doubt this, try to get any combination of former Warren Commission counsel of your selection to debate me on their work or mine at the Press Club with you as the moderator. My one stipulation would be fairness, in the division of time and in insisting on responsiveness, not speeches. So, please do not try to explain all of this away in your own mind by saying so many people could not conspire. Simplify it: what are the facts. Newsweek won't publish it but you'll have peace of mind and at some time in what I hope is not the distant future you will not feel pricks of conscience. What I tell is what is. My problem with the appendix was what to omit.

Have you any idea how many times I've defied the DJ to charge me with perjury when I charge them with this just to get a judicial determination of fact? Do you think I am unaware of the potential? I await the first pro forma denial and if you want to check the court records I'll give you the citations. So, thanks and try to live with it as, alas, it really is.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg